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CHALLIS
My Wife's Husband

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THE MINOR DRAMA

THE ACTING EDITION.

No. CXXVI.

MY WIFE'S HUSBAND.

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.

BY F. CHALLIS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A Description of the Costume—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits—
Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and the
whole of the Stage Business.

AS PERFORMED AT THE PRINCIPAL
LONDON AND AMERICAN THEATRES.

NEW YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH,
• 122 NASSAU STREET, (UP STAIRS.)

CAST OF CHARACTERS.—[MY WIFE'S HUSBAND.]

	<i>Park, 1830.</i>	<i>Queen's, London.</i>
MR. WILDLOVE, - -	Mr. Richings.	Mr. Vining.
BRASS, - - - -	Mr. T. Placide.	Mr. Chapman.
PETER POPPLETON, -	Mr. Barnes.	Mr. Ross.
CAPT. CLIFFY, - -	Mr. Woodhull.	Mr. Howard.
TESTY, - - - -	Mr. Foot.	Mr. Gattie.
JOSEPH, - - - -	Mr. Povey.	Mr. Coates.
1ST WAITER, - - -	Mr. Charlton.	Mr. Brown.
2d DO. - - - -	Mr. Bisset.	
ISABELLA, - - - -	Mrs. Blake.	Miss A. Tree.
MRS. WILDLOVE, - -	Mrs. Wallack.	Miss Le Voi.

COSTUME.

MR. WILDLOVE.—Brown coat—black tights—Hessian boots, &c.

PETER POPPLETON.—Shooting coat—buckskin breeches—fair top boots.

CAPT. CLIFFY.—Naval uniform.

TESTY.—Brown old man's suit—shoes and buckles

JOSEPH.—Livery.

ISABELLA.—White satin dress.

MRS. WILDLOVE.—Pink satin dress.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; C. D. *Centre Door*.

* * * The reader is supposed to be on the stage, facing the audience.

MY WIFE'S HUSBAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room at an Inn; table and chairs, with a coat over the back; bells ringing, &c.*

Enter two WAITERS, L.

First Waiter. This way, sir—this way.

Wil. [*Without.*] Brass! Brass! I say

Second Waiter. This way, gentlemen.

First Waiter. Oh, I say John, have you seen Brass, Mr. Wildlove's servant? He's in such a devil of a passion; oh, here he is,—this way, sir.

[*Exeunt Waiters, R.*]

Enter WILDLOVE, followed by BRASS, L.

Wil. Where the devil can that rascal of mine be?—Is this what you call making haste, you scoundrel?

Bra. I'm sure, sir, I used every exertion, but the lady lives at the other end of the town, and I had not an opportunity—

Wil. Opportunity, indeed!—don't tell me about opportunities, when on my errands you shall fly.—Well, did you see my charmer?—Have you enquired who she is?—what she is?—whence she comes?—whither she goes?—what her father is?—who her mother was?—or how many aunts, uncles, and cousins she has? Just answer these few particulars and I'll forgive you.

Bra. Oh! dear me!

Wil. Dear!—To be sure she is. Has she not cost me two whole days? Only consider, Brass—eight and forty hours from my beloved wife. Not that I care a curse about the girl, but I promised to be at home a week ago.

Bra. I am sure my mistress regrets the cause of your delay.

Wil. I dare say she does, poor thing. I would not cause her a pang for the world, therefore it is far preferable that

she should suppose I am detained by illness than you know what.

Bra. Certainly, sir; I can affirm that you have suffered a martyrdom.

Wil. Ah, Brass, ye single men cannot imagine how comfortable a husband finds himself in such a situation. The sweet anticipation of meeting after the pangs of absence, which is my sole motive for leaving your mistress in town.

Bra. How blessed you are, sir, with a partner so engaging.

Wil. True!—very engaging,—has engaged me for life. No matter, if I can but discover who this angel is,—she is an angel, is she not, Brass?—Eyes—sparkle—sparkle—sparkle;—lips like twin rubies, and then—

“ Her ivory cheek scarce tinted like the glow,
The setting sun reflects on new-fall'n snow.”

Bra. For all the world like my mistress!

Wil. Pshaw!—Never make comparisons, they are so odious!—But what success?—any answer for me?

Bra. I could gain no intelligence until it was my good fortune to meet her maid, sir.

Wil. Her maid! I'll be bound you soon knew all about it then.

Bra. She was not to be done so easily. However, I learned that her name was Isabella.

Wil. Delightful!—Isabella!—charming name! Brass, I'll give you a guinea!

Bra. That she resides with her father.

Wil. Admirable! You shall have five, Brass—five guineas!

Bra. I persuaded the maid to deliver your note, and after waiting two hours she brought an answer.

Wil. An answer!—Quick! where is it?—I'll give you twenty guineas!—you are the best fellow upon earth and deserve my eternal esteem; depend upon me I'll do something handsome for you. Now for the answer, my dear fellow.

Bra. Bless me! I hope—I cannot have lost it.

Wil. Lost it!—Say that word again, and I'll be the death of you! and cut you off with a shilling—

Bra. [*Giving a letter.*] Here it is—but ~~for~~ hurry me so [*Aside.*] Written by mistress herself, in a forged hand to deceive him.

Wil. [*Reading.*] “ If your professions be really sincere, and you seek an interview, fail not to meet my servant at the library this evening, who will conduct you to your Isabella.” Brass, my boy, I'll be the making of you!

Bra. That is too much, sir—I had rather have the twenty guineas which you were pleased to promise just now.

Wil. Leave them with me;—be assured they shall be nothing to what I intend.

Bra. I forgot to say that Miss Isabella is engaged to her cousin, who is expected every day at her father's.

Wil. Engaged to her cousin! I'll break his unfortunate neck.

Bra. Poor gentleman! What has he done?

Wil. Nothing yet I hope, and I'll take good care that is all he shall do. While I keep the appointment, you must be upon the watch for this hero.

Bra. I will: but what shall I tell him, sir?

Wil. Any thing you please;—say the family he came to look for are gone.

Bra. Where?

Wil. Gone to look for him. Tell him his intended father-in-law has married his daughter himself, so he cannot have her, and that you would advise him to return immediately, as the scarlet fever is raging,—any little thing in that way.

Bra. I understand, sir,—some trifle after my peculiar manner. Stay, sir, I called at the office and found this letter which had been there a week. [*Gives the letter.*]

Wil. Upon my life, you had better turn two-penny postman. I dare say it is from that pestering booby Crackaway, the coachmaker; curse the fellow! he expects to be paid, and had the impudence to threaten me with a visit from a bailiff, because, after he had called fifteen times for the money, I threatened to kick him down stairs.

Bra. An unreasonable varlet!

Wil. Let me see the direction. My wife's writing by all that's scrawling! I dare say the contents are highly interesting, but I really cannot spare time to read them now, so I think you may as well answer it for me. Say I am recovering, and am desired to be kept perfectly quiet.

Bra. Mistress will never think of coming, after such a hint.

Wil. Mind, Brass, I cannot tell what may occur; so, should we meet by accident, you must not know me.

Bra. Trust me for that, sir.

Wil. Say something kind for me in your answer;—am dying to behold her soon, but above all be sure impress strongly that no one must disturb me, as my success depends upon being left to myself. [*Exit, R.*]

Bra. Ha! ha! ha!—Yes, you will indeed see her much sooner than you expect. My mistress is acquainted with every proceeding; for although my master's letter, containing the intelligence of his pretended indisposition, did not disclose our address, yet the post-mark gave sufficient evidence where we might be found. This unknown beauty,

who has captivated my master, is my mistress's cousin, and the ladies have resolved to play him a trick, which it is hoped will cure him of these rovings. But it is no affair of mine—each rewards me liberally, and I am in duty bound to make myself useful. Who have we here, I wonder?—a strange looking fellow!—Egad, I'll put on this coat and see if I can't act the gentleman a little. [*Puts on the coat.*]

Enter WAITER, L.

Wai. This way, sir, if you please; excellent accommodations.

Bra. Surely this is our rival.

Enter POPPLETON, in a shooting dress, gun, &c. L.

Pop. There's a good young man; give my dogs some meat—take care of the pug, for it's a huge favourite of mama.

Wai. I will, sir.

[*Exit, L.*]

Pop. When! oh, dear! what warm work this is;—they may well call it firing, for blow me if I an't just melting.

Bra. You appear equipped for execution, sir.

Pop. Yes! rather a swell cut, an't it? Do you know, as I came across the park, I was afraid the keepers might take me for a *buck* and shoot me.

Bra. Ha! ha! ha!—good sport this morning, sir.

Pop. Sport!—egad! I hav'nt yet found out the sport, tramping over ploughed fields in the dog days; and as for the game, blow me but it's all *wild* fowl I think, for none can I see. To be sure something moved in a bush, but as soon as my gun went off egad, if I didn't go off too: for out popped summut brown, that run away like fun.

Bra. Ah, my dear sir, you should adopt the new system, which totally precludes the use of dogs.

Pop. I'm glad there is a new way, for my dogs ran away too—poor things! they an't been used to a gun; no more has my shoulder, for it had such a thump, bless you it's all black as gunpowder.

Bra. Modern sportsmen use the double barrel, one to start the game, while the other is reserved to kill.

Pop. Yes, and I should be killed. One barrel is heavy enough for me; for what with running after the pug, and carrying my accoutrements, I'm just a dying. This sportsman's life will be my death! and my uncle may shoot himself, for I won't, that's flat. [*Sits down.*]

Bra. [*Aside.*] His uncle!—it must be the same. What! the nephew of my old esteemed, and anciently respected friend, Mr. Testy? I knew you in a moment from his description—family nose, expressive features, countenance an

index to the mind. My dear sir, how d'ye do?—very well? Upon my life, I am glad to see you.

Pop. Upon my life, so am I.—What! do you know my uncle?

Bra. Know him!—I know every body.

Pop. No!—come, now, that's too strong.

Bra. Of consequence, I mean. I am just like one of the family. Had the pleasure to dine with your uncle yesterday,—worthy old soul, neither of us tasted a morsel for talking about you.

Pop. Well, that was kind;—worthy old soul is he? I'm glad of that Mr. What's-your-name?

Bra. Harrington—Captain Harrington, much at your service, [*Aside.*] and my master's.

Pop. Then there's my cousin, who I am come down to marry; tho' I have never seen her or uncle yet, but mama managed it all.

Bra. Miss Isabella is an angel!—plays, sings, and dances to perfection.

Pop. Dances, does she? Egad I'll shew her something—I an't much of a *shot* but know a little about *balls*, I fancy. There's our assembly at the Cat and Warming-pan; we do go it so every other Monday.

Bra. Unfortunately you have a rival; be assured that a lady possessing such attractions could not remain unnoticed. But it is of little consequence, as a man of your bravery and gallantry must soon put every other suitor to flight.

Pop. Suppose they won't fly?

Bra. Then they must be made. Twelve paces and a brace of balls—bang! bang! The business is settled.

Pop. Perhaps he may bang, bang me;—besides, I an't used to those sort of *balls*.

Bra. Come, come, I'll let you into a secret;—the young lady foolishly prefers a dashing captain just returned from a cruise.

Pop. Ah! she hasn't seen me.

Bra. But her father's vote and interest are secured in your favour. I can confidently assert that your rival will not relish a duel, notwithstanding his commission; press your suit boldly, and the day is your own.

Pop. I don't value the day a fig's end; are you sure he won't fight? Only think, if I should be killed.

Bra. A mere trifle; you would have the satisfaction to die on the field of honour, in the cause of beauty—Cheer up, many a mau risks his life for such a chance.

Pop. Any body may have mine. However, if I must I must! for mama would not see me again if I dared go home without a wife. You're certain he won't fight?

Bra. On the word of an officer and a gentleman.

Pop. I've a great mind to invite him to dinner; may-be he will settle the business for me. [*Aside.*] My dear captain, if you will favour me with your company to dinner, we can talk the matter over; afterwards, I shall be obliged if you will shew me the way to my uncle's?

Bra. With the greatest pleasure. Here, Waiter!—you are so pressing; Waiter!—so obliging. Here, John, Thomas! where the devil are ye all?

Enter WAITER, L.

Wai. Coming, sir.

Bra. Coming, sir! This is always the case when I call. Quick!—prepare the front room, with dinner for two immediately. Let me see—fish, couple of ducks, little game, veal cutlet, and some other trifle; with a handsome desert: and be sure let the Madeira be good; the Champagne which you sent up at my last party was execrable—couldn't drink it. [*Aside.*] Deuced good reason why. There, fly.

Wai. Yes, sir.

Pop. [*Aside.*] I could see he's a gentleman with half an eye. Such a manner of ordering the servants.

Wai. Would you prefer a private room, gentlemen?

Bra. A private room!—would you choose to be private?

Pop. Oh! certainly! A *private* room in this *public-house*, by all manner of means.

Wai. This way, gentlemen—this way.

[*Exeunt Brass and Poppleton, arm in arm, R.*]

Re-enter POPPLETON, R.

Pop. [*Taking his gun.*] These things go off sometimes!

[*Exit, R.*]

SCENE II.—*An apartment in Testy's house, with folding doors, C. F. a closet, L. R.*

Enter, TESTY, R.

Tes. Plague take all relations, say I! A man cannot retire, with the intention to live at his ease in the country, but a host of cockney nephews and nieces swarm around him like locusts, devouring all before them. There is that booby Poppleton; I intend him to marry my daughter, Isabella, so he has sent word that he will favor me with his company for a week's shooting; occupying my servants, breaking down my fences, and destroying my game. I'd be sworn he never saw a gun in his life, except the old musket that his father used when in the volunteers! I have not seen the youngster since he was an infant, so hope for the best. Then my daughter has a visitor in her newly married cousin,

Mrs. Wildlove, to whom I have the happiness to be guardian. She, too, gives me the hope of an immediate introduction to her husband, whom she has married while on a visit to town. I have never seen him, but reports are unfavourable. Egad! if he displease me, not a farthing of her fortune shall he touch!—and to crown all, I suspect that Isabella loves that roving captain: oh, a plague take all relations! Here, Joseph!

Enter JOSEPH, R.

Jos. Sir!

Tes. Has the gentleman arrived whom I expected from town?

Jos. Not yet, sir.

Tes. The coach must have come in so I'll step to the office, Joseph:—do you know Captain Clifflly?

Jos. I have seen him, sir.

Tes. And would recognize him again, no doubt. I think I can trust you, Joseph.—My daughter's in love with this hero; but, for good reasons, it is my desire that she marry another. Now, as I am assured that he gains admittance into my house, I wish you to keep watch until I return.

Jos. I will, sir.

Tes. Let every person have free entrance, then be it your care to detain them. If you can think of no other expedient, lock the door; only do as I desire, and you shall have no cause to regret serving me, for I am determined to satisfy my doubts.

Jos. Your commands shall be obeyed, sir.

Tes. That's right. Do your duty, and depend upon my liberality. *[Exit, L.]*

Jos. Very pretty duty it is, too—to be jailor, without assistants, to two young wild creatures, and all the men they choose to see. However, master is right, for to be sure Miss Isabella does allow Mr. Clifflly to come and see her; and come he will, and knock my brains out if I dared say a word—but I'll make bold to lock the door. *[A knock.]* There we are!—I'd be sworn that door knows when master is from home, for, as soon as his back is turned the fun begins. *[Knocking.]* Go on. *[Knocking.]* You need not make that noise, for I shan't hurry. *[Exit, slowly, L.]*

Enter ISABELLA and MRS. WILDLOVE, R.

Mrs. W. Well, my dear Isabella, are you ready to receive my faithless swain?

Isa. Every thing is prepared, my dear cousin, and Clifflly has promised his assistance.

Mrs. W. I only fear that Edward's presence will frustrate our plans, should he forget himself.

Isa. I am the willing surety for his good behaviour, for I would not tell him our secret until he vowed to be quite calm:—there is nothing to dread from him—I am only apprehensive that you will betray us.

Mrs. W. Not for worlds!—Was it not unkind to send me word that he was taken suddenly ill, when, on my arrival, I find my truant spouse the gayest of the gay, and sending billets-doux to you.

Isa. Which, like a good girl, I forwarded to his lawful wife, and cheerfully assist in the cause of reform.

Mrs. W. Or rather revenge, my sweet cousin, for I am determined to tease him for this flirtation.

Isa. Admirable spirit! But have I not more cause to quarrel with my fate, when my father insists that I marry the odious Mr. Peter Poppleton, whose name alone is sufficient to give me the horrors. Only imagine, “Mrs. Poppleton and the little Misses Poppletons,” bawled by the stentorian lungs of a servant, as I enter a friend’s house.

Mrs. W. Your ideas are very fertile, Isabella; at any rate you might have omitted the younger branches.

Isa. They come of course, you know; besides, I am commanded to forget Clifflly, but that is impossible; it is my duty to obey papa, but love will not be controuled

Enter CAPTAIN CLIFFLY, L.

Cl. Ladies, your most devoted—I had scarcely time to reach the door, where I have been knocking for the last half hour, before Mr. Wildlove, who is hastening on the tiptoe of expectation to his appointment.

Isa. I am to remain and receive the faithless wretch.

Mrs. W. While Edward and I step into the adjoining parlour.

Cl. Is Isabella to be left alone? That will be quite barbarous—I am sure she will be frightened, so with your permission I will keep her company.

Isa. Indeed I do not feel the least alarm! A married man coming to make love by appointment!—such charming sport.

Cl. I am positive you will prefer company, Bella; it is so shocking to be alone—quite horrific, I assure you.

Mrs. W. My kind, considerate sir, then pray who is to take care of me, or am I to be shut up by myself like a cross child?

Cl. By no means, I only imagined—

Mrs. W. That your society would be more agreeable to Isabella.

Cl. Well, if Bella must receive your husband alone, she need not give him too much encouragement.

Mrs. W. Certainly not. A cold and respectful distance should be maintained during the first interview.

Isa. Ha! ha! ha! ye are both jealous, I declare. If I hear the least murmuring, beware my power; for I can punish ye, by accepting the offer of the gallant knight who comes to throw himself at my feet.

Cl. Fie! Bella,—I jealous, indeed!

Mrs. W. This is truly ridiculous, when I trust you with my husband.

Cl. There is nothing to fear from Mr. Wildlove, I hope.

Isa. These vagaries but injure the cause in which we are engaged;—I can forgive your doubts, for where love exists, jealousy will intrude.

Cl. Generous Isabella!

Isa. I hear footsteps on the stairs; some one approaches,—fly to your concealment.

Wildlove. [*Without.*] Cursed dark stair-case—reminds me of the monument.

Mrs. W. Hush! 'tis his voice—he comes.

[*Exeunt Clifflly and Mrs. Wildlove through folding doors; c. v. Isabella takes a book and pretends to be reading.*]

Enter WILDLOVE, L.

Wil. Confound that queer looking fellow at the door, I might have broken my neck for what he cared—he was deuced particular to lock me in, however.—Ah! there she sits like beautie's queen,—engaged with some work breathing sentiment and love, in every page. I wish she would look.—Ahem!—ahem! Cannot be deaf, surely. Madam.

Isa. Sir.

Wil. Madam, your most devoted and highly favoured servant waits to thank you for this kind condescension.

Isa. Where the pleasure is mutual, sir, the obligation, if any exist, must be equal.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Poor angel! she will fall into my arms,—I perceive she is paralyzed. Really, madam, I know not how to express my thanks, my gratitude for this interview. I first beheld you at the concert, two evenings since—from that moment my thoughts, hopes, wishes—my heart, all have been centered in one object—need I confess a passion for you, as sincere and tender as it must be eternal?

Isa. And would you thus avow your love upon so slight an acquaintance?

Wil. Love, madam, searches too deeply to require ages to fix an asylum.

Isa. Suppose, after marriage—

Wil. [*Aside.*] Marriage! I never can open my mouth to a girl, but that word is sure to stop me.

Isa. It would be ungenerous to conceal my faults. Should some smart dashing young officer pester me with his attentions, positively I cannot answer for the consequences.

Wil. Candid, I confess. Devilish good idea for a beginner; has some talent, I'll be bound I shall discover it in time.

Isa. There are husbands who neglect their wives, until it becomes imperative, in self-defence, to give them some cause for suspicion.

Wil. Sweet innocence! That such instances do exist, is a most melancholy fact, but fortunately the occurrence is so seldom.

Isa. Quite the contrary. I have a friend lately married to one who formerly pretended to adore her—alas! she now mourns her husband's infidelity, and has become the object of his neglect and scorn.

Wil. Can such monstrous villainy exist?

Isa. As truly as I behold you.

Wil. And the lady—

Isa. To be revenged, carries on a trifling correspondence with another, while her credulous partner considers he only is licensed to roam.

Wil. Poor fellow! Well, I must confess that I admire the ability of the woman who could so easily deceive her husband. What a simpleton must he be! Excuse me; if I doubt—

Isa. You are perfectly at liberty to doubt what you please, but I am as positive of the truth of my assertions, as that you stand before me. Only imagine that you were so situated.

Wil. Ha! ha! ha! a devilish good thought. Why, madam, I defy all the wives and women in christendom to cheat me;—no, no, I am a man of the world!—you see we men of the world are not to be deceived by all the artifice and cunning even of our mother Eve. No, no!

Isa. And you are so invulnerable to jealousy, that were your wife happily engaged in the next room, you could remain perfectly calm and comfortable?

Wil. My wife in that room?—did you say in that room, or was I mistaken?—in that room?

Isa. Fal lal la! Here s bouncing. Do pray endeavour to stand still.

Wil. Now, madam, I am still: I beseech you continue your entertaining conversation; I am highly delighted, I assure you. Since I had the happiness to find myself in your society, you have kindly favoured me with a wife, a rival, and I only await the finishing touch—half a dozen children to complete the family picture.

Isa. Nay I only wished you to fancy yourself married, and your beloved partner had listened to the soft persuasions of another.

Wil. That is not much you require, certainly. Zounds!

death, and the devil! Madam, what is it you mean?—My wife has played me false? But I'll quickly be satisfied,—I'll drag the weak woman and her base paramour before the—I'll sacrifice the one to my wounded honour, and the other to my vengeance, a sad and terrible example to all future naughty wives.—I'll—I'll—yes, I will.—Ha! ha! ha! an excellent joke. Madam, excuse my laughing, but it is so facetious—ha! ha! ha!—I do enjoy a joke from the bottom of my soul. Yes, I would do all that, providing I were married—ha! ha! ha!

Isa. I am so happy to see you enjoy yourself—ha! ha! ha!—it is so pleasant.

Wil. [*Attempting a laugh.*] Ha! ha!—so it is, madam. Ha! mighty agreeable, to be playing the fool in this manner.

Isa. I am always pleased to see my friends enjoy themselves.

Wil. I see it in your countenance, madam—such an amiable feeling.

Isa. I am at a loss to account for your strange conduct, sir! That the relation of an every day occurrence should cause such agitation, requires an explanation.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Blown by Jupiter!—Dearest angel—I—I—can only attribute my perturbed state of mind, to the relaxation of my nerves, produced by a concatenation of circumstances, united by the hand of art, and delivered with the force of nature.—[*Aside.*] If she comprehend that, I am dumb for ever.

Isa. Admirably defined, sir.

Wil. [*Aside.*] I knew that explanation must satisfy any reasonable soul.

Pop. [*Without.*] Pug, pug, pug!—take the cat away!

Isa. A stranger's voice—and coming this way.—Conceal yourself, I entreat you.—Fly!

Wil. Fly!—yes, if my *angel* will lend me her *wings*.

Isa. Should you be discovered I am lost for ever.

Wil. But truly I know not how to escape, unless I could balloon it from the window.—It is my turn to govern now.
[*Aside.*]

Isa. Ah! there is a closet,—quick! footsteps are at the door.

Wil. [*Enters the closet.*] There, I have kept my word. I say, do not fasten me in and forget to feed me, or I shall be starved to death!

Isa. Good fortune be praised—he is secure from detection for the present; and as this interruption will interfere with our project, I must away to warn my companions.

[*Exit, C. D. P.*]

Enter PETER POPPLETON *and* JOSEPH, R.

Pop. Oh, dear me! I am so tired—blow the pug, I say; what the deuce had he to do with the cat?—a nasty spiteful brute—you ought to keep such animals in the cellar.

Jos. He's safe enough now, sir, never fear.

Wil. [*Aside—looking from the closet.*] I've company already, I see.

Pop. [*Sits down.*] Well, it can't be helped;—there's half-a-crown for your trouble. Now you must answer me a few questions. In the first place, your young mistress is very pretty, I believe?

Jos. [*Sits down.*] That she is, sir. Pray go on, I'll answer any thing you please.

Pop. And there's a gentleman who comes to see her?

Jos. To be sure there is.

Wil. [*Aside.*] The fellow must allude to me.

Jos. But master don't know that, sir.—I'll tell you a secret, for you are so generous.

Pop. Will you though?—I am so fond of a secret!

Wil. [*Comes from the closet behind them—apart.*] So am I.

Jos. He is in the house at this moment.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Here's a discovery.

Pop. In the house do you say?

Jos. Hush! don't speak so loud—he can't be far off.—Young mistress is dying for him.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Sensible girl!—displays excellent taste.

Jos. Master has some suspicions, and I am to keep watch.

Pop. Here's a plot! But I say, what sort of a man is he?

Wil. [*Aside.*] I have a wonderful inclination to knock his brains out.

Pop. Yes, but I mean how does he look?

Wil. [*Aside.*] Very interesting just at present.—What the devil can he want with me?

Jos. He looks rather big.

Pop. Big!—is he very big?—D'ye think he'll make any resistance?

Wil. [*Aside.*] Resistance! It must be—

Pop. D'ye think he can fight? because you see I want to get him away.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Yes, it is that rascal Crackaway has sent to arrest me, and this booby is a bailiff in disguise.

Jos. I can't say about his fighting—he seems as if he could, and would too.

Pop. Does he indeed?—then I won't have any thing to do with him alone; my friend, the officer, is waiting for me in the street—he'll settle it for me.

Wil. [*Aside.*] His friend the sheriff's officer, I'll swear.

Jos. You must not go to him, for I have orders to detain every body till master returns, and I dare not disobey him, for he told me if I did as he wished, he'd give me—[*Knocking.*] a double knock!—what a thunderer! I must answer the door.

Pop. You won't leave me alone, will you?

Wil. [*Aside.*] My only chance of escape.

Jos. Stay here 'till I come back, I shall not be a moment.

Pop. Suppose he should come—the great man seven feet high, what am I to do?

Jos. Young mistress has taken care of him—she'll keep him safe, I'll warrant.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Not while a bailiff is at his heels.

Jos. No, sit still and make yourself comfortable, I shall be back directly. [*Exit, L.*]

Pop. I wish I was comfortable at home, too. What business have I in this affair, I should be glad to know?

Wil. [*Aside.*] One of my polite friends being gone, I'll take the liberty to follow; and if this agent of the law should endeavour to prevent me, he must take the consequences.

[*Going.*]
Pop. Who's there?—[*Sees Wildlove.*] oh, dear! I must brazen it out.—I am so frightened.

Wil. [*Coming forward.*] I'll try what bravado will do for me. Well, sir.

Pop. [*Aside.*] There he is; how fierce he looks. Well, sir.

Wil. I say, sir—I say, sir—yes! that's what I say, sir!

Pop. And I say, sir, if you come to that, you are just the man I want, sir,

Wil. [*Aside.*] As I suspected. [*Going.*] I am sorry that I cannot stay now, but if to-morrow will suit—

Pop. [*Aside.*] I think he's afraid.

[*Lays his hand on Wildlove's shoulder.*]

Wil. Paws off, pug!

Pop. You are not going in that way, sir;—there's a small account to be settled between us.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Calls it a small account—that's favourable.—Take your hands off, sir!

Pop. The sum total is—

Wil. I know—eighty-four pounds, sixteen shillings and eight pence.

Pop. [*Aside.*] He trembles, for certain. Come, that won't satisfy me.

Wil. Then you are very unreasonable!

Pop. I can't help it—I want something more than that.

Wil. Something more! If you do not make the best of

your way down that stair-case, I'll give you something more presently.

Pop. You need not stare at me so—I an't to be frightened by big looks—I know all about your being here, though you managed it so cleverly.

Wil. Indeed! and I know that you are confoundedly impertinent, and I have a great mind to wring your large nose from your little face, Mr. Catchpole.

Pop. [*Produces a pistol.*] Don't you call names, or perhaps you may catch it, Mr. Swagger.

Wil. If I must submit, you will perhaps accommodate me with time.

Pop. [*Aside.*] He means to fight then?

Wil. Distance is a trifling consideration, although I have affairs of the greatest importance to arrange, to which I will devote this night;—to-morrow I pledge my honour to meet you at any hour you may appoint.

Pop. Wishes to make his will, I dare say, and then he will do me the favour to blow my brains out. [*Aside.*] I'll agree, and take the mail for London this evening.

Wil. Upon consideration I am aware that you must do your duty, so delay not a moment; I am ready to attend you.

Pop. What shall I do?—what will become of me?—he won't wait until to-morrow. [*Aside.*] Pray don't let me hurry you, sir—I would not wish for the world;—only consider, take leave of your friends.

Wil. Pshaw! I am ready—is it not enough?—so produce your credentials, and I am your man.

Pop. [*Aside.*] My credentials!—a new name for pistols.

Wil. What the devil are you fumbling at?—Quick! Jack Wildlove never yet flinched from misfortune.

Pop. Wildlove!—Is your name Wildlove?

Wil. My godfathers and godmothers call me so.

Pop. Then I'm safe—I am safe!—you'er not the man I took you for;—I am so pleased—I am so happy!

Wil. You are rather maddish I think.

Pop. That's not the name I was told. Are you sure you are the other gentleman?—I understood you came to see Miss Isabella.

Wil. Probably I did, sir—what then?

Pop. Nothing.

Wil. Perhaps you will have the goodness to inform me what you mean by this strange behaviour?

Pop. [*Aside.*] Now he's getting fierce again!

Wil. Will you favour me with an explanation?

Pop. Why—I—you see I thought you were my rival, and so—

Wil. Then you are not a bailiff, and have no wish to take me under your protection?

Pop. A bailiff indeed!—Not I—I came to challenge—to fight you.

Wil. Devilish civil, upon my life. Well if you wish it, I will do my best to accommodate you, since you have been so obliging.

Pop. Pray don't think about it, I have not the slightest wish to fight, I assure you.—One narrow escape is enough for me. Miss Isabella is much at your service.

Wil. And you resign all claims.

Pop. Indeed and I do!—This night's coach shall find me safely seated on my way home, and when I come wife-hunting or game-shooting again, may I perish by my own powder and shot; so good-bye.

Wil. Better take one pop before you go.

Pop. So I will, in the coach.

[*Exit, R.*]

Wil. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exit into the closet, L.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An apartment in Testy's house as before.*

Enter WILDLOVE from the closet.

Wil. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! I wonder where Isabella is.—If, as I have just heard, she adores me, I have no fear of discovery—my retreat will soon be converted into a paradise. I can imagine her sylph-like form tripping to give me liberty, and her silver tones exclaiming—

Tes. [*Without.*] Give me the blunderbuss, Joseph.

Wil. Somebody coming!—talking of fire-arms too. I really do not feel to possess half the spirits I had.

Tes. [*Without.*] Joseph, place the constable at the door while I make search.

Wil. Constable?—make search!—I am a lost man! I wish they may not find me. [*Exit into the closet L. F.*]

Enter TESTY with a blunderbuss, and JOSEPH with a broom, L.

Tes. Did you not say he was here?

Jos. I am sure I opened the door to him, sir, and no person has left the house.

Tes. I'll trounce the villain yet. The rascal—I'll teach him a shorter method of leaving my premises than the street door affords.

[*Wildlove looks out from the closet.*]

Jos. He must have jumped out of the window—it's only thirty feet from the pavement.

Wil. [*Aside*] A mere trifle.

Tes. That's a good thought, Joseph. Look'ye, this blunderbuss contains three balls.

Jos. Three balls!—oh, then I suppose it belongs to my uncle!

Tes. Hold your tongue, you rascal. Well, it is loaded with three bullets, and a sufficient quantity of small shot. Egad! I'll make the fellow take the leap, or digest its contents. I'll quickly see if young sparks are to invade the repose of peaceable families, and fill my daughter's head with love tales. You are sure you know him?

Jos. Downright positive, sir.

Wil. [*Aside*.] If ever we meet, you shall have striking proofs of our acquaintance, and bear marks of our friendship too.

Tes. I'll answer for it, Isabella has concealed him in her chamber.—Yes! I'll make search there;—he shall not escape;—follow me, Joseph—I'll put a stop to these proceedings. [*Exeunt Tesy and Joseph, R.*]

Wil. [*Coming forward in a livery suit.*] I have taken the liberty to pluck one of the flowers from my Eden, very much in the shape of a coat and waistcoat, in which disguise I hope to elude the vigilance of the worthy gentleman that spoke last. If I once again enjoy the privilege of viewing the exterior of this mansion, where I have endured so many perils,—may my next adventure be my last. Yes, my charmer must pine, fret, and sigh herself into a consumption: I am sorry for her, very sorry—poor girl; but if unreasonable old fathers will interfere, they deserve to lose their daughters.—Ha! what's that?—voices in the next room!—I'll take a peep, however.—The key-hole stopped!—A man conversing with a lady! or my ears deceive me. “To go or not to go? that's the question.” I will remain! that's the answer;—curiosity gets the better of my fears, and I am determined to be gratified.

[*Retires to the closet.*]

Enter CAPTAIN CLIFFLY and Mrs. WILDLOVE, leaning on him, C. D. F.

Cli. [*Advancing to the front C.*] This way my love; rest assured no danger is near.

Mrs. Wil. Thanks, dearest Edward,—how shall I repay your kindness?

Wil. [*Aside, peeping from the closet.*] Ah! my wife.

Cli. Grant me but your smiles, and I am content.

Mrs. Wil. My husband—

Cl. Think not of one unworthy your remembrance,—he who valued not the possession of such charms deserves to lose them. Cheer up, my love.

Wil. [*Aside.*] I can bear this no longer!—yet, how shall I account for my appearance from this dismal closet, and in this costume?—oh that cursed little gipsy, who bantered me with her jokes; but I'll watch their motions.

Cl. My servant will procure horses, which will be ready in an hour; favoured by the darkness of the night, we may defy pursuit. To-morrow's dawn will find us on our way to France, where love and happiness await us.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Taking French leave with a vengeance! If she consent—

Mrs. Wil. My every study shall endeavour to convince you how sincerely I am devoted to your wishes—my gratitude for the release from a man whom I now forget for ever.

Wil. [*Aside.*] A very praiseworthy, affectionate resolution, upon my life!

Cl. Then haste we to our destined abode! Despising the world and its glittering joys, we will leave the noisy haunts of men.—In some retired spot, close by a murmuring stream, and shaded by the foliage of surrounding trees, we'll raise our habitation. A jessmine-entwined cottage.

Mrs. Wil. How charming to live in such retirement.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Delightful prospect!—the old story—love, a little cot, a clear spring, and potatoes.

Cl. The mountain nymphs and swains shall tend our flocks.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Milk cows and drive sheep.

Mrs. Wil. The villagers attend our little fêats.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Sour cream and oatmeal cakes!

Cl. The fields will yield us corn.

Mrs. Wil. My dairy supply the poultry.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Ploughing and pig-killing.

Cl. In short, our's will be the home of love.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Smock-frock—russet gowns—a farm yard—and a dozen children.

DUET.—CAPTAIN CLIFFLY and Mrs. WILDLOVE.

When misery decends on earth
To blight life's sweetest flowers,
The joy that flies from hearts of mirth,
Shall find a home in ours.
When fleeting love begins to roam
In search of brighter hours,
To seek in hearts a lasting home,
That home shall be in ours.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Curse him! how loving he looks. What

an agreeable situation is mine!—I can bear it no longer!—He kisses her hand, while she is nothing loth. Oh! I shall go mad with jealousy and vexation!

Enter ISABELLA, in haste, C. D. F.

Isa. My father is coming this way from my apartment where he has been searching for some person whom he declares is concealed.

Mrs. Wil. What must be done?

Cli. Hush! he is at the door.

Wil. [*Aside—Making signs to Isabella.*] Confound it!—she will not look this way.—I begin to suspect a hoax;—the ladies and gentleman appear to be old friends.

Re-enter TESTY, with a blunderbuss, R.

Tes. My efforts have been unsuccessful. Hey-day! what do I see?—more relations, I suppose;—another full house for a month,—I really am determined to set up an hotel. Why, Isabella, what's all this?

Isa. This is Mrs. Wildlove, sir.

Tes. I know that is Mrs. Wildlove, sir!—she has been here these three days, I believe.—Do you think I am turned idiot? And pray who is that gentleman?

Wil. [*Aside.*] The very question I wish answered—What a good sort of an old man it is, if he had not a blunderbuss.

Isa. That gentleman, papa, is—

Mrs. Wil. Yes, sir, he is—

Cli. Yes, sir, I am—

Tes. [*Presenting the blunderbuss.*] He is and I am—why don't you speak?—tell me this instant.

Isa. That is Mr. Wildlove, papa.

Mrs. W. Yes, sir, Mr. Wildlove, my husband.

Cli. Your most obedient servant, sir.

Wil. [*Aside.*] The most obliging, civil gentleman in existence. This is following it up. How amusing to be half stifled in this closet, while a polite good-natured soul runs away with my wife, and personates me to facilitate his scheme.

Tes. Mr. Wildlove, you are welcome. I heard that you were expected;—could not be happy when absent from Mrs. Wildlove, eh? I am glad to see you so affectionate, for I assure you strange reports had reached me, but this proof of your attention has secured my favour and consent.—I forgive your hasty marriage, and here are the necessary papers which entitle you to your wife's fortune.

Mrs. W. My dear uncle—

Tes. Zounds! Not a word, madam—I will not be interrupted—I am not accustomed to contradiction,—your husband's appearance pleases me, and I—

Cl. My honoured sir—

Tes. Hold your tongue, sir, or I will exert my authority by making use of this cane,—I choose to do things hastily—what is it to you?

Wil. [*Aside.*] An ill-mannered interrupter.

Tes. Your father and I were playmates—schoolfellows—friends. In an ungarded moment we disagreed and parted for ever. I have only to add, that time has not lessened my esteem for him, and I am happy that his son is allied to a part of my family. However, had I found you otherwise than your appearance bespeaks—a gentleman, my doors should have been closed against you, depend upon it.

Wil. [*Aside.*] My wife's uncle!—the friend of my father! Here's a plot—a vile conspiracy!—oh! what have I lost? While I droop in misery, neglected, forgotten—they will riot in luxury, and I pine in my prison two feet by one.

Tes. Come, Isabella, our friends need refreshment.

Isa. [*Aside.*] We are taken in our own snare, and no method of escape appears probable.

Tes. We will to supper, and then to rest. Mr. Wildlove, that is your chamber to the right—a good night's rest will fit us for a little trip I propose we make to-morrow. The surrounding scenery is worthy observation, and a visit for a week to the neighbouring lakes will repay our trouble.—Joseph!

Wil. [*Aside.*] When they are at supper I will steal down stairs; with the assistance of Brass, arrive in my proper character, and overwhelm my enemies with confusion.

Enter JOSEPH, L.

Jos. There is a gentleman wishes to see you, sir.

Tes. I'll step to him immediately. Joseph, I shall be from home for a few days, lock this room up directly—double lock it, d'ye hear? and give me the keys.

[*Exeunt Testy and Joseph, L.*

Wil. [*Aside.*] I will not stay here to be locked up, while they regale at supper, or starve for a week when they are gone to the lakes. [*Coming forward.*] I really regret exceedingly to disturb the happiness and delightful tranquillity which prevails—

Cl. Pray who are you, sir?

Wil. My business is first with this lady, sir.

Mrs. W. With me!—impossible!

Cl. And by what right, sir?

Wil. No great right, sir, only as her husband—as my wife's husband.

Mrs. W. The odious wretch!—take him from my sight!

Isa. Indeed, cousin, I cannot commend your choice.

Cl. Well, I must confess that the servants in this house are the most impudent scoundrels in existence!

Wil. Do you take me for a footman, sir?

Cl. But for the presence of these ladies, I would horse-whip you down stairs.

Mrs. W. I beg we may not interrupt your wishes.

Wil. This hectoring will not serve your purpose,—I assert that this lady is my wife.

Mrs. W. I shall certainly faint if the monster be permitted to remain near me.

Isa. See! she swoons!—help!

Enter BRASS, L.

Bra. Help!—what's the matter now, I wonder?

Wil. Ha! Brass here!—I shall easily be identified. This, sir, is my servant, if you think proper to question him, no doubt but he will satisfy your doubts.

Cl. [*To Brass.*] Do you know who this madman is?

Bra. I never saw him before in the whole course of my life, sir.

Cl. What's that, scoundrel?

Wil. He knows nothing of you, and it is clear you must be an impostor or a lunatic.

Wil. O monstrous depravity!—Am I awake?—my own wife denies me—my servant swears he never saw me, and I almost doubt whether I am myself or somebody else. [*To Mrs. Wildlove.*] My dear madam, will you do me the favour to examine me? am I not your husband?

Mrs. W. [*Turning from him to Clifflly.*] Oh! save me!—do not allow him to approach.

Wil. [*To Isabella.*] And you, fair excellence—surely you will not deny me?

Isa. I never beheld you until to-day.

Bra. Poor fellow! nobody will own him.

Wil. I cannot bear it!—I'll raise the house!—I'll be revenged!—Madam!—ladies!—sir!—Brass!—the devil!—will ye hear me?—will you lend me a patient hearing for a few moments?—I am not mad!

Bra. He's breaking out again. Take care—these mad folks have such a knack at biting. Poor creature! takes me for his servant too.

Wil. [*Aside.*] I have it!—I suspect a trick here, and have

hit upon a scheme shall turn the tide in my favour;—overwhelm them with their own contrivance, and at the same time get me out of this unfortunate affair.

Cli. Excuse me, ladies, I must chastise this insolence.

Wil. Do not trouble yourself, sir, or alarm the ladies.

Isa. We are not the least frightened.

Wil. Indeed! For you, sir, be assured you shall hear from me when you least expect it.

Cli. The sooner the better, sir.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Now for my ruse-de-guerre, which if it succeed, I shall retrieve all my misfortunes.—Ladies—sir—Brass—now hear me!—oh horrible! [*Exit L.*]

Omnes. [*Laughing*] Ha! ha! ha!

Isa. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! we have frightened him however.

Mrs. W. This is no jesting matter, Isabella. How shall we undeceive my uncle?

Cli. I only fear that we have carried this joke too far.

Bra. The old gentleman is coming, and does not appear over pleased.

Enter TESTY, L.

Tes. Plague take these interruptions I say. Now to supper, and then we'll go to bed. Come, girls, to supper. [*To Cli fly,*] Wildlove!—why man, you seem in the dumps;—what's the matter now?—Not been quarrelling I hope. Isabella, what is all this whispering about?

Cli. [*Aside.*] I must confess. My dear sir—

Isa. Yes, my dear papa, we—

Mrs. W. My dear uncle—

Tes. Zounds! what d'ye mean?—Speak out, will ye?—oh, I see it all—I guess the reason of your silence, so don't stand fidgetting there.

Isa. And do you really know?—and will you forgive us, sir?

Tes. Will I forgive you?—to be sure I will. Oh! you little baggage, I see it in your looks; you are disappointed that your cousin Poppleton is not here to join us!—Hush! I won't hear a word—I know that is it,—don't deny it.—Hold your tongues! But I expect him soon for he had left the Inn on his way hither.

Enter JOSEPH, L.

Jos. Mr. Poppleton is below, sir.

Tes. Send him up, Joseph. Come, no more pouting.

[*Exit Joseph, L.*]

Bra. [*Aside.*] Poppleton coming!—then I must be going.

Enter WILDLOVE, L. in travelling coat, &c.

Wil. [*Running to Testy and embracing him.*] Ah! my

honoured uncle!—Do I behold you well?—my more than parent! let me embrace you.—Ladies, your truly devoted.
—[*Embracing again.*] My dear, dear uncle!

Tes. What! nephew Poppleton!—I'm glad to see you.
—How you are grown.

Wil. Quite out of knowledge. [*Aside.*] I hope—

Isa. [*Aside.*] Amazement!—Wildlove!

Mrs. W. [*Aside.*] My husband!

Cli. [*Aside.*] Here's an end to my pretensions.

Tes. I think I should have known you, nephew.—The family face. Let me introduce you. Isabella, my daughter—Mr. Poppleton, your cousin—Mr. and Mrs. Wildlove.

Wil. Is that the beauteous Isabella, whose charms have been the admiration of all London?—Madam, I salute you—Mrs. Wildlove, I am your's—

Bra. [*Aside.*] I see how things are going, and it is only fair that I give master a turn now—Mr. Poppleton I am glad to see you looking so well.

Wil. [*Aside to Brass.*] You know me now, you rascal?—Ah Brass!—how do, Brass?—hav'nt seen you sometime;—pretty well, eh? [*Aside.*] Swear you know me, or dread the weight of my arm. How's mother and sister, eh, Brass?

Tes. You know Mr. Wildlove, then, since you seem so intimate with his servant?

Wil. Know Wildlove!—aye, that I do.—Jack, how are you?—we are old play-fellows. Why uncle, we are sworn friends; Wildlove and I are two bodies, and one soul—sort of Siamese-youths, as I may say,—an't we, Jack?

Cli. [*Aside.*] I dare not deny the acquaintance.—[*To Testy.*] Mr. Poppleton and I are very old acquaintances, sir.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Been very intimate for this half hour.

Tes. And his wife—

Wil. His wife's a nice woman!—a huge favourite of mine I assure you, uncle;—had half a mind to cut Jack out once;—nearly succeeded too, didn't I Sukey?—How do you find yourself?—how's Mary and Jane?—Saw your brother last week,—desired his kind love to you.

Mrs. W. [*Aside.*] How he triumphs at our confusion!

Tes. Just such a rattling blade as his father, and takes after me exactly. But I say, nephew, how are all friends at home?

Wil. Quite hearty, thank you. My sweet cousin, Isabella, those bright eyes of yours have already captivated your slave.—Almost supper time, uncle?—saw the cloth laid as I came up stairs;—do me the honour to accept my arm. Excuse me, unkey, we'll lead the way. What a commodious dwelling! windows only thirty feet from the ground—quite a trifle for a jump, eh, uncle?—Such excellent closets for preserves.—Come along, supper will be codd,
[*Wildlove is leading Isabella out, l.*

Enter PETER POPPLETON, meeting them.

Pop. Never saw such a place—I can't find my way out.

Wil. Who have we here?

Pop. Do pray shew me the way to the street door.

Tes. Pray who are you, sir?

Pop. I shall be glad if you will tell me. This morning I was called Poppleton, but I've been called a good many names since then. I want to find one Mr. Testy.

Wil. [*To Testy.*] Says his name is Poppleton!

Tes. I am Mr. Testy.

Pop. Then you are my uncle.

Wil. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha!—it won't do, friend; that's a good one—I am Peter Poppleton, nephew to my uncle.

Pop. Yes!—come, that's a good one. Why my friend, Captain Harrison, can prove who I am.—Captain, speak for me.

Bra. Do you address me, sir?

Pop. You are the officer I dined with, I believe.

Bra. You must mistake, sir.

Wil. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha! ha! you see, uncle, he evidently is not an old offender, or he would not choose such a witness to speak in his favour.

Pop. But I say I don't mistake;—didn't you say you know'd me by the family visage—didn't we dine together at the Blue Lion?—and didn't I pay for the plaguey lot of wine you drank?

Bra. Couldn't be, sir—I never drink wine—it does not agree with me.

Pop. I wish you had thought of it before dinner.

Tes. This story is too improbable;—calling Mr. Wildlove's servant an officer.

Wil. [*Apart to Testy.*] Suppose, uncle, this should be some favoured lover of my cousin's in disguise; what think ye of it?

Tes. Right, boy.—I have long suspected something of the kind.

Wil. [*To Poppleton.*] I say Mr. Impudence, hear me. We know you, notwithstanding your attempt at concealment. Miss Isabella is your magnet.—Fie, cousin! when I consider the honour of my uncle's house, it behoves me to express my opinion upon this unpleasant subject.

Isa. What can he mean?

Tes. Go on, boy, go on—all the family blood in your veins. You shall have my daughter—that scamping rascal, who has been so anxious to win her, shall find me a match for him.

Cl. [*Aside.*] Must I endure all this?

Wil. [*To Poppleton.*] Let me advise you to depart in-

stantly, and consider yourself fortunate that, in the plenitude of our mercy, we do not make an example of the worst of offenders. For my cousin, Isabella, I know not what to say; making her father's house a place of concealment for her favourites!—shame!—fie, cousin, fie!

Isa. Sir, I deny your assertions!

Wil. [*Apart to Isabella.*] Hush! my angel, remember the closet;—only assist me, and you are safe.

Pop. All this signifies nothing—I've my uncle's correspondence in my pocket.

Tes. Aye, produce them, I know my own writing.

Wil. [*Aside.*] Those cursed epistles!

Pop. Here they are then, look at them.

Tes. Where are my spectacles? I cannot see without.

Wil. [*Takes the letters.*] My uncle cannot read them;—the fact is, he does not know his letters, so they are not proofs. But we know you—that you are making use of a name which does not belong to you.

Pop. And I know you too.—I think we met about half an hour ago, in this room. You may shake your head, but I am positive, and there's a livery jacket peeping out under your great coat,—we'll soon see who's who, Mr. Doubleskin.

Wil. The devil take his penetration!

Tes. What does he say? Give me the letters. As I live, my own writing!

Pop. To be sure they are; and here's another from my mama.

Wil. [*Aside.*] It's all over with me—I see through my wife's stratagem, and am resolved to profit by this day's adventures.

Tes. [*To Wildlove.*] Then who are you, sir?

Wil. The ladies should have the privilege of explaining.

Isa. Mrs. Wildlove, sir, deserves the preference.

Mrs. W. [*To Wildlove.*] There is but one event which could reconcile me to my uncle's displeasure,—the hope—the assurance of a husband's reformation and forgiveness.

Wil. Then we have but to request our uncle's blessing.

[*They kneel to Testy.*]

Tes. And you are man and wife?—and I have been deceived?

Wil. We confess our errors, sir.

Tes. Then rise, and take my best wishes.—A generous mind requires no greater concession. What says Isabella?

Isa. That she trusts to her father's generosity and affection.

Tes. And she shall not repent it.

Cl. Might I presume to an interest in your kindness, sir?

Tes. Upon my word, I must trouble some of my friends for an introduction.

Wil. My dear uncle, I will explain every thing to your

satisfaction hereafter.—For the present, allow me to present Captain Cliffly, who hopes that the resemblance to your old friend, which you were pleased to discover while he represented your humble servant, will not operate to his disadvantage.

Tes. Captain Cliffly!

Wil. The same, sir.—Isabella, I believe, can identify.

Tes. Charming cross purposes! But what thinks my nephew Poppleton?

Pop. I only think it's almost supper time, uncle.—Miss Isabella is at liberty for me. "Do in haste, and repent at leisure," as my mama says.

Tes. This is all very fine, but I am not quite sure that every body can tell who they are. A short time since, Cliffly was Wildlove—Wildlove was Poppleton, and Poppleton was—

Pop. Going home by the mail, if he could have found his way out.

Tes. But now that he is found out, I insist upon his staying. I perceive there is some mystery in this day's proceedings, which will require too long an explanation to be entered upon now. I have only to add, if you are happy, I am content.

Wil. Many thanks, my dear uncle. Isabella, I shall expect that Captain Cliffly be not allowed to lose himself for want of a guide, like our friend Poppleton, whose pardon I now solicit; and if we have been so fortunate as to gain the smiles and applause of our kind surrounding friends, whose approbation is our best reward, our first wishes are realized, and we are happy, and I should be indeed content could I but secure your welcome greetings for

My Wife's Husband!

FINALE.

"We trust that our efforts to cause you delight
From plaudits will now have a greeting;
And hope those kind patrons, who come here to-night,
Will honour our next merry meeting!"

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

Brass. Cliffly. Isabella. Mrs. Wild. Wild. Testy. Pop.
R.] L.

THE END.

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